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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/716,320	11/17/2003	Guillermo J. Rozas	TRAN-P156	5239

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WAGNER, MURABITO & HAO LLP
Third Floor
Two North Market Street
San Jose, CA 95113

EXAMINER	
ODOM, CURTIS B	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2611	

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	01/08/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/716,320	ROZAS, GUILLERMO J.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Curtis B. Odom	2611	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *17 November 2003*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-22* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-22* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *01 June 2004* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claims 2-6 and 7-23 are objected to because of the following informalities:

a. In claims 2-6 and 7-23, the acronyms (DRAM, DDR, DQ, and DQS) are suggested to be defined.

b. In claim 21, the phrase "DRAM component inoperable" is suggested to be changed to "DRAM component is inoperable".

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims 1-3, 7, 8, and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Yang et al. (U. S. Patent No. 6, 553, 472).

Regarding claim 1, Yang et al. discloses a method for automatically calibrating intra-cycle timing relationships between command signals, data signals, and sampling signals by

implementing programmable time delays (see column 3, lines 10-23) for an integrated circuit device SDRAM), comprising:

generating command signals (see column 3, lines 36-43) for accessing an integrated circuit component;

accessing data signals (see column 3, lines 36-43) for conveying data for the integrated circuit component;

accessing sampling (clock) signals (see column 3, lines 36-43) for controlling the sampling of the data signals based on the rising edge of the clock signal (see column 3, lines 48-67); and

automatically adjusting a phase (timing) relationship in a memory controller by adjusting programmable delays (see column 6, lines 20-25 and column 8, lines 41-67) between the command signals, the data signals, and the clock signals (as described in column 5, line 32-column 6, line 19) to calibrate (optimize) operation of the integrated circuit device.

Regarding claim 2, Yang et al. further discloses the circuit device is an SDRAM (see column 3, lines 10-23).

Regarding claim 3, Yang et al. further discloses adjusting a timing (phase) relationship is performed by a memory controller (Fig. 2, block 31, see column 6, liens 20-25) coupled to the SDRAM.

Regarding claim 7, Yang et al. discloses a system (see Fig. 2) for automatically calibrating intra-cycle timing relationships between command signals, data signals, and sampling signals by implementing programmable time delays (see column 3, lines 10-23) for an integrated circuit device SDRAM), comprising:

a controller (Fig. 2, block 31) for generating command signals (see column 3, lines 36-43) for accessing an integrated circuit component;

a delay calibrator of programmable delays (see column 5, line 31-column 6, line 25 and column 8, lines 41-67) integrated within the controller (see column 6, lines 20-25) for accessing data signals (see column 3, lines 36-43) for conveying data for the integrated circuit device and for accessing sampling (clock) signals (see column 3, lines 36-43) for controlling the sampling of the data signals based on the rising edge of the clock signal (see column 3, lines 48-67), the delay calibrator configured to automatically adjust a phase (timing) relationship in a memory controller by adjusting programmable delays (see column 6, lines 20-25 and column 8, lines 41-67) between the command signals, the data signals, and the clock signals (as described in column 5, line 32-column 6, line 19 and column 8, lines 41-67) to calibrate (optimize) operation of the integrated circuit device, wherein a valid initial operation point is not required since the controller has the ability to calculate delays and set its own initialization point that offers the optimum system performance (see column 2, lines 30-39).

Regarding claim 8, Yang et al. further discloses the circuit device is an SDRAM (see column 3, lines 10-23).

Regarding claim 12, Yang et al. discloses a method for finding an initialization point in a SDRAM (see column 2, lines 30-39) by altering intra-cycle timing relationships between command signals, data signals, and sampling (clock) signals by implementing programmable time delays (see column 3, lines 10-23) for the SDRAM, comprising:

generating command signals (see column 3, lines 36-43) for accessing the SDRAM;

accessing data signals (see column 3, lines 36-43) for conveying data for the SDRAM;

accessing sampling (clock) signals (see column 3, lines 36-43) for controlling the sampling of the data signals based on the rising edge of the clock signal (see column 3, lines 48-67); and

automatically adjusting a phase (timing) relationship in a memory controller by adjusting programmable delays (see column 6, lines 20-25 and column 8, lines 41-67) between the command signals, the data signals, and the clock signals (as described in column 5, line 32-column 6, line 19) to calibrate (optimize) operation of the DRAM and find an optimal initialization point (see column 2, lines 30-39), wherein a valid initial operation point is not required since the controller has the ability to calculate delays and set its own initialization point that offers the optimum system performance (see column 2, lines 30-39).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 4-6, 9-11, and 15-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yang et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6, 553, 472) as applied to claims 2, 8, and 12, in view of Suzuki (US 2004/0160833).

Regarding claims 4-6, 9-11, and 15-17, Yang et al. does not disclose the SDRAM is a DDR SDRAM, the data signals comprise a plurality of DQ signals, or the sampling (clock) signals comprise a plurality of DQS signals.

However, Suzuki et al. also discloses a memory controller (see Fig. 1, block 1100) which controls a DDR SDRAM (see Fig. 1, block 1000), and provides both continuous data (DQ) signals and data strobe (DQS) signals to the DDR-SDRAM to enable both reading and writing for the DDR-SDRAM (see sections 0029-0030). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the SDRAM of Yang et al. with the DDR SDRAM of Suzuki since Suzuki states the DDR (double data rate) SDRAM provides higher frequency operation (than that of the SDRAM), see section 0004.

Regarding claim 18, Yang et al. discloses all the limitations of claim 18 (see rejection of claim 12), including the operations of the SDRAM written as software (see column 2, lines 11-16). Yang et al. does not disclose the SDRAM is a DDR SDRAM, the data signals comprise a plurality of DQ signals, or the sampling (clock) signals comprise a plurality of DQS signals.

However, Suzuki et al. also discloses a memory controller (see Fig. 1, block 1100) which controls a DDR SDRAM (see Fig. 1, block 1000), and provides both continuous data (DQ) signals and data strobe (DQS) signals to the DDR-SDRAM to determine both reading and writing operations for the DDR-SDRAM (see sections 0029-0030). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the SDRAM of Yang et al. with the DDR SDRAM (and DQ and DQS signals for control of the DDR SDRAM) of Suzuki since Suzuki states the DDR (double data rate) SDRAM provides higher frequency operation (than that of the SDRAM), see section 0004.

6. Claims 13 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yang et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6, 553, 472) as applied to claim 12, in view of Keeth (U. S. Patent No. 6, 016, 282).

Regarding claims 13 and 14, Yang et al. discloses configuring the memory controller to operate with the DRAM in accordance with an optimal operating mode (see column 6, lines 20-25). Yang et al. does not disclose the time delay operation involves performing a coarse time delay calibration by altering the timing relationship in accordance with a large step interval to find the operating mode of the DRAM component; and performing a fine time delay calibration by altering the phase relationship in accordance with a small step interval to optimize the operating mode of the DRAM component, wherein the optimal operating mode is determined by the fine calibration.

However, Keeth discloses a memory device (see Fig. 1) including a memory controller (see Fig. 1, block 22) coupled to a DRAM (Fig. 1, block 26), wherein minimum and maximum delays from command at the memory controller to read data an the memory controller are accommodated by performing vernier clock adjustments, wherein there is a coarse delay adjustment with a large bit interval and a fine delay adjustment with a smaller interval (within a bit period (see column 4, lines 11-18 and column 7, lines 44-51). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the timing delays of Yang et al. with the coarse and fine delay as disclosed by Keeth since Keeth states this coarse and fine (vernier) delay adjustment allows data to be accurately clocked in memory devices even at higher data transmission rates (see column 2, liens 46-55).

7. Claims 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yang et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6, 553, 472) in view of Suzuki (US 2004/0160833) as applied to claim 18, and in further view of Keeth (U. S. Patent No. 6, 016, 282).

Regarding claims 19 and 20 (see above rejection of claim 18), Yang et al. discloses configuring the memory controller to operate with the DRAM in accordance with an optimal operating mode (see column 6, lines 20-25). Yang et al. and Suzuki do not disclose the time delay operation involves performing a coarse time delay calibration by altering the timing relationship in accordance with a large step interval to find the operating mode of the DRAM component; and performing a fine time delay calibration by altering the phase relationship in accordance with a small step interval to optimize the operating mode of the DRAM component, wherein the optimal operating mode is determined by the fine calibration.

However, Keeth discloses a memory device (see Fig. 1) including a memory controller (see Fig. 1, block 22) coupled to a DRAM (Fig. 1, block 26), wherein minimum and maximum delays from command at the memory controller to read data an the memory controller are accommodated by performing vernier clock adjustments, wherein there is a coarse delay adjustment with a large bit interval and a fine delay adjustment with a smaller interval (within a bit period (see column 4, lines 11-18 and column 7, lines 44-51). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the timing delays of Yang et al. and Suzuki with the coarse and fine delay as disclosed by Keeth since Keeth states this coarse and fine (vernier) delay adjustment allows data to be accurately clocked in memory devices even at higher data transmission rates (see column 2, liens 46-55).

8. Claims 21 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yang et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6, 553, 472) in view of Davis (U. S. Patent No. 5, 781, 766).

Regarding claim 21, Yang et al. discloses a method for finding an initialization (operating) point in a SDRAM (see column 2, lines 30-39) by altering intra-cycle timing relationships between command signals, data signals, and sampling (clock) signals by implementing programmable time delays (see column 3, lines 10-23) for the SDRAM, comprising:

generating command signals (see column 3, lines 36-43) for accessing the SDRAM;

accessing data signals (see column 3, lines 36-43) for conveying data for the SDRAM;

accessing sampling (clock) signals (see column 3, lines 36-43) for controlling the sampling of the data signals based on the rising edge of the clock signal (see column 3, lines 48-67); and

automatically adjusting a phase (timing) relationship in a memory controller by adjusting programmable delays (see column 6, lines 20-25 and column 8, lines 41-67) between the command signals, the data signals, and the clock signals (as described in column 5, line 32-column 6, line 19) to calibrate (optimize) operation of the DRAM and find an optimal initialization (operating) point (see column 2, lines 30-39), wherein a valid initial operation point is not required since the controller has the ability to calculate delays and set its own initialization point that offers the optimum system performance (see column 2, lines 30-39).

Yang et al. does not specifically disclose the DRAM component is inoperable at specified initial operating points.

However, as described above, Yang et al. discloses the memory controller has the ability to calculate delays and set its own initialization point that offers the optimum system performance (see column 2, lines 30-39). Davis further discloses operating points for the DRAM control and data signals wherein the DRAM produces invalid data (or is inoperable), see column 2, lines 30-49). Therefore, it would have been obvious to set an initialization point in Yang et al. when the DRAM produces invalid data as described by Davis since Yang et al. states calculating delays and setting an initialization point offers the optimum system performance (see column 2, lines 30-39).

Regarding claim 22, the claim method includes features corresponding the above rejection of claim 21, wherein Yang et al. also discloses the SDRAM coupled to a memory controller of a microprocessor chip which represents a printed circuit board (see column 1, lines 19-25).

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Matsui (U. S. Patent No. 2003/0231543) discloses a memory controller for controlling a DRAM. Keeth et al. (U. S. 6, 101, 197) discloses coarse and fine delay tuning for signals in an integrated circuit including a memory controller and DRAMs.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Curtis B. Odom whose telephone number is 571-272-3046. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday- Friday, 8-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jay Patel can be reached on 571-272-2988. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Curtis Odom
January 3, 2007